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ABSTRACT

This packet of handouts focuses on the role of the family in easing their child with disabilities from one early childhood educational program to another. Typical items include: reasons for involving families in transition; questions parents ask about "appropriate" placement; planned conversations with parents during the transition process; parent concerns before their child's transition; a family needs survey; tips for parents in the transition process; a letter from the parent of a child with a disability to parents of nondisabled children; steps to resolving conflicts in transition planning; a guide for sharing information with the new program; clarifying family roles in transition planning; planned conversations with parents about transition to preschool; questions used in the MAPS (McGill Action Planning System) process for family involvement; questions parents can ask themselves regarding placement; and a matrix to assist in active problem solving. (DB)

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WHY INVOLVE FAMILIES?

1. Families are the primary protectors, teachers, caregivers for their children, the constant in a child's life.
2. Families are the primary decision makers for their children.
3. Families can provide valuable information.
4. Families can be valuable resources.
5. Families can learn transition skills early in the child's life and use them for years to come.

FAMILY PARTICIPATION BENEFITS TRANSITION

Family participation on transition teams benefits the transition process. Families can

a) help children adjust to a new program

b) facilitate carryover of learning to new programs.

c) provide important information about child and family needs

d) be responsible for visiting potential classrooms and conducting home-based skill training

e) be supportive of other team members' efforts

f) serve as "ambassadors" of both sending and receiving programs

g) learn how to work with schools and begin longterm involvement with thier child's formal education

FACTORS THAT AFFECT FAMILY PARTICIPATION INCLUDE:

1. Work schedules and other time constraints
2. Economics (e.g., $$$ to hire a babysitter or miss work)
3. Family makeup (# of children, involvement of grandparents)
4. Ethnic/cultural/religious background (discipline practices, goals for their children)
5. Modeling by mentor parents
6. Emotional needs
7. Information about expectations
8. Time constraints
9. Desire to be involved
10. Social support

- See also Chandler, L.K., Fowler, & Lubeck. (1987). Assessing family needs: The first step in providing family-focused intervention. Diagnostique, 11, 233-245.

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'Appropriate' placement---Questions parents can ask

Both federal and state law require a child's special education program or service to be "appropriate." This isn't necessarily the same as "best." Appropriateness is not defined in the laws, but court decisions have defined services as appropriate when they: (1) are based on the assessed needs of the child, (2) allow the child to make meaningful progress, (3) are agreeable to parent and school, and (4) meet state standards for special education.

Often, it's the parents who must grapple with whether a service or program is appropriate for their child. They must make their own judgement---andthen convince the school and others of the appropriateness.

If you can organize answers to the following questions (when a change of placement or program is proposed for your child), you will be able to go into a meeting about the proposal well-prepared and ready to obtain specific answers to issues that concern you. Select those questions which pertain to your particular child.

Questions To Ask The School

A. Why is the proposed special education placement needed for my child?

B. What other placements (sites or settings) were or can be considered for my child?

C. What related services are needed by my child?

D. Specifics about the proposed placement:

1. Ages of other students in the program:_____

   Ages of other students in the building:_____

2. Ability of other students in comparison to my child:

   Above_____ Below_____ About Same_____

3. How much time will my child spend with children without disabilities?

4. What are the possible effects on my child's behavior by other students in the program?

5. Student/staff ratio:

   Students_____ Staff_____

6. Largest number of students in the room at any one time:

7. Location of classroom within the school:

8. Amount of time my child will receive specific instruction each day:

   Individual_____ Small group_____ Number in group_____

9. Is the building accessible for all of my child's needs/activities?

10. Staff person most knowledgeable about my child's disability:

11. How long will my child's school day be?

    Starting time_____ Ending time_____

12. Transportation time required:

13. Is a behavior plan needed?

14. Does the program exist now? How do I arrange a visit?

Considerations for the Parent

A. What I like about the proposed placement:

B. What I do not like about the proposed placement:

C. The issues I am most concerned about as I consider this placement are:

CONVERSATIONS WITH FAMILIES ABOUT TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN

Conversation 1: The Initial Transition Planning Meeting. Six to nine months before the child leaves the program, the family and the family service coordinator/sending teacher should:

* Discuss the transition process and review the steps so that the family's interest and desired level of involvement can be reflected in their individual transition timeline.

* Determine who will be involved with the child's transition (including the sending program and the receiving program). NOTE: Families should be free to invite a friend or advocate to join them at future meetings (e.g., teacher, therapist, caregiver, friend). If additional program staff are to be included, parents should know ahead of time who they are and why their presence will be useful.

* Discuss the family's need for information about transition, the family's role in transition planning, and the family's and staff's roles in preparing the child for transition.

* In writing or reviewing the IFSP/IEP, incorporate relevant family and child outcomes related to transition.

* Review the parental consent form for permission to exchange information with the receiving program or school district, if appropriate.

* Discuss parental rights in transition.

Conversation 2: Planning for the Transition Meeting or Multidisciplinary Team Conference. About four months before the child leaves the program, the family and the family service coordinator/sending teacher should:

* Review the timeline.

* Discuss the child's progress, eligibility considerations, the evaluation process, and re-evaluation policies.

* Discuss the differences in educational plans at the next level and show the receiving program's IFSP/IEP form, if different from existing forms.

* Discuss all possible program options. If the child had no disability where would he/she be?

* Review the local community's program directory which lists all services for young children (if available).

* Discuss potential classroom sites for the family to visit (if families want this information). Begin to arrange visits and facilitate family involvement. Begin to eliminate inappropriate settings.

* Identify activities family may choose to do to help prepare the child for the transition.

* Identify, if possible, the members of the transition team (including representatives from the sending and receiving programs, other family members, community members--such as daycare personnel--and special services staff) who will be present at the upcoming eligibility and placement meeting.

* Discuss arrangements for the child to visit the classroom, playground, and activities in the new setting.

Conversation 3: Sharing Information with the New Program. Before the child enters the new program or soon after, the receiving teacher and the family discuss the following areas. In some cases this information may be collected by the sending teacher and sent on to the receiving teacher. Arrange a meeting of receiving team members at the child's home if parents wish.

A. Child Information

1. What are some of the activities your child enjoys doing most at home?

2. What are some things that are most difficult for your child to learn?

3. What activities would you like to see continued in the new program?

4. Describe the types of rewards that work best with your child.

5. What types of discipline work best with your child?

6. What are some things for both parents and teacher to watch for to know if things are going well for the child? What may be signals that the child is having difficulties adjusting to the new setting?

7. Identify the child's siblings who are in the same building.

8. Other things that you would like the new teacher to know about your child are ....

B. Family Involvement Information

There are many ways families choose to be involved in programs. Please indicate the ways your family would like to be involved. My family would like to:

_____ Observe my child in the new program.

_____ Volunteer in the new program.

_____ Work with my child at home.

_____ Participate in parent-teacher meetings.

_____ Help select learning goals for my child.

_____ Participate in parent organizations such as PTA/PTO.

_____ Know about my child's successes and problems in the classroom.

_____ Other

C. Communication with the New Program

Teachers and families are busy and may find it difficult to make time to communicate with each other. Yet both want to share information. What would be your preferred way of communicating with the new teacher?

	How Often?	Best Times?
1. Notes:	_____	_____
2. Informal meetings:	_____	_____
3. Parent-teacher meetings:	_____	_____
4. Telephone calls:	_____	_____
5. Journal	_____	_____

-See also Fowler, S.A., Chandler, Johnson,& Stella. (1988). Individualizing family involvement in school transitions, Journal of the Division for Early Childhood, 12, 208-216, and Hains, A.H., Rosenkoetter, & Fowler. (1991). Transition planning for families in early intervention programs. Infants and Young Children, 3(4), 38-47.

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QUESTIONS PARENTS MENTIONED MOST OFTEN AS CONCERNS BEFORE THEIR CHILD'S TRANSITION

1. When should transition planning begin?
2. How should transition planning proceed? Who should be involved at each step?
3. Who identifies the new program? Who is responsible for interaction between the sending program and the new program regarding the child's transition?
4. How can parents prepare themselves, their families, and their child for the transition?
5. What characteristics should parents look for in a new program that will meet their child's (and family's) special needs?

TRANSITION PLANNING WITH FAMILIES

1. Respect family needs and preferences.
2. Include "conversations" with families about transition during other professional-parent interactions.
3. Acknowledge that transitions can be stressful.
4. Encourage family participation at the beginning, middle, and end of the process.
5. Begin planning a year before the transition.
6. Share information about the transition process, possible receiving programs, and create opportunities to visit them.
7. Help families set transition-related goals.
8. Arrange for families to talk with other families.
9. Have one person at the receiving program that families can contact when questions arise.
10. Answer questions as they occur.
11. Evaluate transition services from the family's view during and after the transition.

- See also Chandler, L.K., Fowler, & Lubeck , '987). Assessing family needs: The first step in providing family-focused intervention. Diagnostique, 11, 233-245, and Johnson, T.E., Chandler, Kerns, & Fowler. (1986). What are parents saying about family involvement in school transitions? A retrospective interview . . . Journal of the Division for Early Childhood, 11, 10-17, and Shelton, T.L., Jeppson, & Johnson. (1989). Family-centered care for children with special health care needs. Bethesda, MD: Association for the Care of Children's Health.

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Handout VI-2

Family Needs-Survey

(Revised, 1990b)

Child's Name:_____ Person Completing Survey:_____

Date Completed:____/____/____ Relationship to Child:_____

Dear Parent:

Many families of young children have needs for information or support. If you wish, our staff are very willing to discuss these needs with you and work with you to identify resources that might be helpful.

Listed below are some needs commonly expressed by families. It would be helpful to us if you would check in the columns on the right ant topics you would like to discuss. At the end there is a place for you to describe other topics not included in the list.

If you choose to complete this form, the information you provide will be kept confidential. If you prefer not to complete the survey at this time, you may keep it for your records.

TOPICS	Would you like to discuss this topic with a staff person from our program? No	Not Sure	Yes
Information 1. How children grow and develop			
2. How to play or talk with my child			
3. How to teach my child			
4. How to handle my child's behavior			
5. Information about any condition or disability my child might have			
6. Information about services that are presently available for my child			
7. Information about the services my child might receive in the future			
Family and Social Support 1. Talking with someone in my family about concerns			
2. Having friends to talk to			
3. Finding more time for myself			
4. Helping my spouse accept any condition our child might have			
5. Helping our family discuss problems and reach solutions			
6. Helping our family support each other during difficult times			
7. Deciding who will do household chores, child care, and other family tasks			
8. Deciding on and doing family recreational activities			
Financial 1. Paying for expenses such as food, housing, medical care, clothing, or transportation			
2. Getting any special equipment my child needs			
3. Paying therapy, day care, or other services my child needs			
4. Counseling or help in getting a job			
5. Paying babysitting or respite care			
6. Paying for toys that my child needs			

TOPICS	No	Not Sure	Yes
Explaining to Others 1. Explaining my child's condition to my parents or my spouse's parents			
2. Explaining my child's condition to his or her siblings			
3. Knowing how to respond when friends, neighbors, or strangers ask questions about my child			
4. Explaining my child's condition to other children			
5. Finding reading material about other families who have a child like mine			
Child Care 1. Locating babysitters or respite care providers who are willing and able to care for my child			
2. Locating a day care program or preschool for my child			
3. Getting appropriate care for my child in a church or synagogue during religious services			
Professional Support 1. Meeting with a minister, priest, or rabbi			
2. Meeting with a counselor (psychologist, social worker, psychiatrist)			
3. More time to talk to my child's teacher or therapist			
Community Services 1. Meeting and talking with other parents who have a child like mine			
2. Locating a doctor who understands me and my child's needs			
3. Locating a dentist who will see my child			

Other: Please list other topics or provide any other information that you feel would be helpful to discuss.

_____

_____

Is there a particular person with whom you would prefer to meet?

_____

_____

Thank you for your time.
We hope this form will be helpful to you in identifying the services that you feel are important.

The Family Needs Survey was developed by Don Bailey, Ph.D., and Rune Simeonsson, Ph.D.
For further information, write the authors at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center,
CB#8180, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27599

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GETTING READY FOR THE NEW PROGRAM: TIPS FOR PARENTS

1. Help your child be excited about going to the new school. Talk often about how much fun it will be to go to the "big school", about activities your child will do there. This will help your child want to make the transition.

2. Tell your child often how proud you are that he/she is growing up, how pleased you are that the child is doing so many things by himself/herself, and how well you know the child will do in the new school. This will help your child feel confident about handling the new experiences ahead.

3. Place your child in situations where he/she needs to follow directions--one-step at first, then two, then three. Teach your child to rehearse directions in order to remember them.

4. Help your child learn self care skills, which are age appropriate, such as putting away toys, handwashing, independent toileting, buttoning, zipping, and shoe tying. Teach your child to recognize his/her own name and the basic colors. Busy teachers value these skills.

5. Put your child in some situations where he cannot do the expected task and must ask for help. If he/she doesn't know how to ask for help, demonstrate polite asking and then wait for the child to imitate you before assisting.

6. Read books with your child every day. Talk together about the pictures and the story. If your child doesn't like to sit still for long, read for a brief time each day; even if the book time is only two minutes long, make it a happy time. You will then notice how your child's attention span increases.

7. Watch TV with your child, especially shows like "Reading Rainbow," "Mr. Rogers," and "Sesame Street." Talk together about what you are seeing. If you allow your child to watch cartoons, watch with him/her. Ask your child to tell you what happened in the cartoon story. Help the child to reconstruct the sequence of events.

8. Let your child help you sort the laundry, set the table, cook, bake, put away groceries, and organize his/her books and toys. All of these are classification tasks, related to school skills.

9. Teach the child to do simple tasks at home. Most young children can learn to hang up their coats and put things away. All but the most severely handicapped children can learn to help pick up their toys. Preschoolers can keep a "school box" at home, where the child is expected to put crayons, scissors, pencil, and eraser. Let your child help you vacuum, sweep, dust, and wash sinks and the bathtub. These very practical jobs also develop physical coordination.

10. Be sure your child has lots of opportunities to run, jump, climb, and play outside. These activities can be done in a city neighborhood, in a rural area, or at a park; they cannot usually be done inside a house! Children who have learned to control their own bodies in space are usually more confident in new situations and more capable of managing complex motor tasks, like walking in a line.

11. Any time you teach your child to do a new task, break it into little parts and teach each part (for example, putting on shoes, cleaning the bedroom, opening a milk carton). Reward with praise each part of the task the child does successfully. Very few people praise a child too much; most of us praise too little.

12. When you go places with your child, talk about what you are seeing. Point out characteristics (color, size, shape) and names of objects you view. Try to be conversational, as you would with an adult, rather than constantly quizzing your child ("oh, look at the red house," rather than "what color is this house?"; "I like the BIG pumpkin best--which one do you like?" rather than "show me the big one").

13. When you get home from a trip to the store or church or a party, ask your child to tell another family member what you did. If the child has difficulty retelling the event, help and support so that the story can be told. This skill is called recasting. It is closely related to reading comprehension.

14. Point out letters and words and numbers in the world around your child (McDonald's, the house numbers, names of family members on letters, the numbers of hymns in the songbook at church). This will provide a foundation for learning symbols in reading.

15. Frequently count objects, touching them as you say the numbers. This will help your child realize that numbers represent sets of things.

16. Talk often about interesting jobs your child might have when he/she grows up--not just about making lots of money at a job. Be sure your child knows that most jobs require working hard and doing well in school.

17. Teach your child to appreciate that every person is unique and special; that human differences are a wonderful part of our world and not a threat; and that all people need to help others as well as be helped BY others in order to live happily.

18. Enjoy time you spend with your child. Positive and trusting attitudes about people and the world which your child learns now will remain with him/her throughout life.

SPECIAL LETTER FROM A PARENT

August 1990

Dear Parents,

Our daughter Elizabeth is in the kindergarten class at Swanson. Your child may talk about the girl who doesn't talk or do the same things they do. That's Elizabeth.

The reason I am writing this is so you can know a little about her for your own information and so you can answer some of your child's questions, if any.

Elizabeth was born with a genetic disorder that left her with multiple disabilities. She is generally very healthy; the disorder resulted in delays in development.

Elizabeth has been getting educational services from District 66 since she was about six months old. When she was twenty months old she started classes at Sunset. She has since been to Westbrook, Oakdale and back to Sunset. These have all been "special" classes where there have been mostly other children with disabilities. During this time we have used regular child care and preschool as well. (I work at home.)

We wanted to stop bouncing around schools and have both of our children go to school in our own neighborhood with all the other kids. I want to stress that we will not just show up at Swanson on the first day of school to drop Elizabeth off. All during the spring and summer I have spent countless hours on the phone and in meetings with everyone involved to plan how Elizabeth would be able to participate in the Swanson kindergarten program.

You know how scary it is to have your child encounter such a challenging new environment. However, I have seen Elizabeth rise to challenges before and surprise us all. She has learned so much! In addition, District 66 staff has spent a lot of time to make sure there is enough support in the classroom when Elizabeth is there so the program is not adversely affected.

I also want to stress that we don't expect the kindergarten staff to "fix" Elizabeth and teach her all the things the other kids are learning. (I wish we could pull off such a miracle.) Elizabeth is in the class to get to know the other children, learn how they behave and play, and learn how to communicate more easily with them. Otherwise, she has her own "education plan". The other children will, in turn, learn so many things from her. Kids her age are much more perceptive than we give them credit for. They have few preconceived notions and they ask good questions.

I tell five-year-olds her brain doesn't always work very well so she has trouble talking, walking and learning how to use toys. Even though she doesn't always answer when you talk to her, she does understand a lot of what is said to her. And she will make choices about what she wants to do. In fact, she can be very determined.

Please don't tell your child that Elizabeth is "retarded". That term only labels her in a negative way by describing one characteristic. She is a bright, happy child who is very determined to explore her world. She swims and swings and plays in sandboxes. She hates TV, but loves books. She has many friends. She is learning a simple sign language that the other kids enjoy using.

Obviously, I have a lot to tell people about Elizabeth. If you have read this far I hope you have found it interesting. Please call me any time if you have any questions or just want to visit.

Yours truly,

Susan Christensen

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STEPS TO RESOLVING CONFLICTS IN TRANSITION PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING

1. Decide who will be involved in the meeting.
2. Identify their needs.
3. Identify the reason for each person's needs or the impact of the need.
4. Generate <u>several</u> solutions to each need.
5. Consider what resources are available for dealing with needs:

   Community
   Family
   Program

6. Discuss and prioritize all the needs.
7. Discuss and select solutions to high priority needs.
8. Assign responsibility for implementing solutions to priority needs.

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FAMILY - PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION

To work cooperatively with families, we need first of all to know ourselves and our own expectations. The following questions can help this process.

1. How do I think families should interact with their children?

2. Do I believe that families must be able to choose how early intervention will be involved in their lives -- a choice based on their values, beliefs, resources, strengths, needs, and aspirations?

3. Should early intervention meet families' needs or help families find ways to meet their own needs?

4. What are my assumptions regarding the family's role as a team member?

5. What are my assumptions regarding the family's involvement in the program? (Is more involvement better? Should parents attend all parent activities? Are parents who attend all parent activities better parents than those who don't?)

6. For whom do we advocate? And in what order?

   the child? the parent? the family? the program? the school/agency?

   What do we do if there is conflict of interest between any two?

7. Do I know what values I hold and how those values may influence my behavior with families? (e.g., being on time, keeping appointments, planning for the future, high achievement, orderliness)

   In what ways might my values differ from or even conflict with the values of the families I serve?

8. What family characteristics make me uncomfortable, anxious or angry?

9. Do I recognize my limitations in working with families?

10. Where do I need more information in order to relate to particular families?

11. Am I willing to step aside when another professional or paraprofessional can relate better to a particular family?

If professionals can answer these questions, then we begin to know "where we are coming from" and can identify beliefs or attitudes that may interfere with collaborative family-professional relationships.

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GUIDE FOR SHARING INFORMATION WITH THE NEW PROGRAM

A. Child Information

1. What are some of the activities your child enjoys doing most at home?
2. What are some things that are most difficult for your child to learn?
3. What activities would you like to see continued in the new program?
4. Describes the types of rewards that work best with your child.
5. What types of discipline work best with your child?
6. Other things that you would like the new teacher to know about your child are. . .

B. Family Involvement Information

There are many ways families choose to be involved in programs. Please indicate the ways your family would like to be involved. My family would like to:

____ Observe my child in the new program.

____ Volunteer in the new program.

____ Work with my child at home.

____ Participate in parent-teacher meetings.

____ Help select learning goals for my child.

____ Participate in parent organizations such as PTA/PTO

____ Know about my child's successes and problems in the classroom.

C. Communication with the New Program

Teachers and families are busy and may find it difficult to make time to communicate with each other. Yet both want to share information. What would be your preferred way of communicating with the new teacher?

	How Often?	Best Times?
1. Telephone Calls :	_____	_____
2. Informal meetings:	_____	_____
3. Parent-teacher meetings:	_____	_____
4. Notes:	_____	_____
5. Journal		

D. Information About the New Program

List any questions you would like to ask the teacher about the new program.

From: Hains, A.H., Rosenkoetter, S.E., & Fowler, S.A. (1991). Transition planning with families in early intervention programs. Infants and young children. 3(4), 38-47.

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F:GSIWNP.H01

GUIDE FOR SHARING INFORMATION AND CLARIFYING FAMILY ROLES IN TRANSITION PLANNING

A. Transition Information

In addition to information about the timeline and transition team members, there may be other topics that will help you plan for the transition. This list contains many different types of information which you might consider helpful while making the transition. Please check the items you would like to know more about in the next few months.

I would like to learn about:

____ Preparing my child for the new program

____ Obtaining related services or child care

____ General differences between my child's current program and the new program

____ Changes that may affect my child and family (such as schedule and transportation) and how best to prepare for them

____ How other families have coped with early transitions

____ Legal rights about testing, records, and my child's educational program

____ Child and family qualifications for community and school programs

____ Assessment procedures and additional tests that may need to be done

____ Differences between potential preschool classrooms or child care options

____ How to visit classrooms or child care facilities and what to look for

____ Information to be shared with the new program

____ How the staff from both programs will be involved

____ Other (please specify)

B. Family Roles

Your family may choose to be involved in the transition in many different ways and for varying amounts of time. This list may help you decide how you and your family would like to be involved. Please check the items you feel you would like to do in the next few months.

I would like to:

____ Help select goals that will prepare my child for transition

____ Help prepare my child at home for transition

____ Review my child's progress with my case coordinator

____ Select goals that will prepare my family for transition

____ Help prepare my family for transition

____ Talk with other families who have experienced the transition

____ Keep a folder of information about my child and transition activities

____ Visit potential programs

____ Help identify my child's needs for special services

____ Help select goals for my child in the new program

____ Participate in eligibility and placement meetings

____ Visit the new program with my child and meet the new teacher

____ Other (please specify)

From: Hains, A.H., Rosenkoetter, S.E., & Fowler, S.A. (1991). Transition planning with families in early intervention programs. Infants and young children. 3(4), 38-47.

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CONVERSATIONS WITH FAMILIES ABOUT TRANSITION TO PRESCHOOL

Conversation 1: Initial Transition Planning. Nine months to one year before the child leaves the program, the family and the family service coordinator/sending teacher should:

* Discuss the transition process and review the steps so that the family's interest and desired level of involvement can be reflected in their individual transition timeline.

* Determine who will be involved with the child's transition (including the sending program and the receiving program). NOTE: Families should be free to invite a friend or advocate to join them at future meetings (e.g., teacher, therapist, caregiver, friend). If additional program staff are to be included, parents should know ahead of time who they are and why their presence will be useful.

* Discuss the family's need for information about transition, the family's role in transition planning, and the family's and staff's roles in preparing the child for transition.

* In writing or reviewing the IFSP, incorporate relevant family and child outcomes related to transition.

* Review the parental consent form for permission to exchange information with the receiving program or school district, if appropriate.

* Discuss parental rights in transition.

Conversation 2: Planning for the Transition Meeting or Multidisciplinary Team Conference. About four months before the child leaves the program, the family and the family service coordinator/sending teacher should:

* Review the timeline.

* Plan the transition meeting. When and where it will occur; who will be invited.

* Identify the members of the transition team (including representatives from the sending and receiving programs, other family members, community members--such as daycare personnel--and special services staff) who will be present at the upcoming eligibility and placement meeting.

Conversation 3: The transition meeting. At least 90 days before the child is elegible for a Preschool Program.

* Discuss the child's progress, eligibility considerations, the evaluation process, and re-evaluation policies.

* Discuss the differences in educational plans at the next level and show the receiving program's IFSP/IEP form, if different from existing forms.

* Discuss all possible program options. If the child had no disability where would he/she be?

* Review the local community's program directory which lists all services for young children (if available).

* Discuss potential classroom sites for the family to visit (if families want this information). Begin to arrange visits and facilitate family involvement. Begin to eliminate inappropriate settings.

* Identify activities family may choose to do to help prepare the child for the transition.

* Discuss arrangements for the child to visit the classroom, playground, and activities in the new setting.

Conversation 4: Sharing Information with the New Program. Before the child enters the new program or soon after, the receiving teacher and the family discuss the following areas. In some cases this information may be collected by the sending teacher and sent on to the receiving teacher. Arrange a meeting of receiving team members at the child's home if parents wish.

A. Child Information

1. What are some of the activities your child enjoys doing most at home?

2. What are some things that are most difficult for your child to learn?

3. What activities would you like to see continued in the new program?

4. Describe the types of rewards that work best with your child.

5. What types of discipline work best with your child?

6. What are some things for both parents and teacher to watch for to know if things are going well for the child? What may be signals that the child is having difficulties adjusting to the new setting?

7. Other things that you would like the new teacher to know about your child are ....

B. Family Involvement Information

There are many ways families choose to be involved in programs. Please indicate the ways your family would like to be involved. My family would like to:

_____ Observe my child in the new program.
_____ Volunteer in the new program.

_____ Work with my child at home.

_____ Participate in parent-teacher meetings.

_____ Help select learning goals for my child.

_____ Participate in parent organizations

_____ Know about my child's successes and problems in the classroom.

_____ Other

C. Communication with the New Program

Teachers and families are busy and may find it difficult to make time to communicate with each other. Yet both want to share information. What would be your preferred way of communicating with the new teacher?

	How Often?	Best Times?
1. Notes:	_____	_____
2. Informal meetings:	_____	_____
3. Parent-teacher meetings:	_____	_____
4. Telephone calls:	_____	_____
5. Journal	_____	_____

-See also Fowler, S.A., Chandler, Johnson,& Stella. (1988). Individualizing family involvement in school transitions, Journal of the Division for Early Childhood, 12, 208-216, and Hains, A.H., Rosenkoetter, & Fowler. (1991). Transition planning for families in early intervention programs. Infants and Young Children, 3(4), 38-47.

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The Family's Assessment Focus (Project Dakota)

These questions will help focus & plan your child's assessment.

1. My child's name is _____ & I would describe him/her this way:
2. My name is _____ & I would describe our relationship (the child & I) in this way:
3. A typical day with my child includes:
4. What my child is really good at or likes to do:
5. What my child needs help with or avoids:
6. What we like to do together (parents & child):
7. Recent progress or changes I have seen in my child at home:
8. Questions I have about my child:
9. My child does best when:
10. How my child lets me know when he wants something:
11. My child is really interested in:
12. I would like my child to learn or get better at:
13. To help my child, I would like help with:

F:FAM-AF.H01

INTEGRATED SERVICES
MAPS (rewritten) To Get You There

A positive and affirming process that can assist a team of families and professionals to creatively dream and plan for inclusion in activities, routines, and environments is a process called McGill Action Planning System (MAPS). The underlying principles which govern this process include: (1) integration, (2) individualization, (3) teamwork and cooperation, and (4) flexibility.

As a vision for use with families as they become involved in early childhood intervention services, this process can become a design for developing a supportive and effective plan for the integration of all participants in the plan. It begins at the pre-assessment stage of early intervention and can be continued throughout the program and extended into the child's total lifespan.

To begin, a Family Service Coordinator or Evaluation Coordinator could possibly present the information about MAPS to the family. Together, the family and the Coordinator, could generate information and ideas related to the questions asked. This information could be recorder on large sheets of paper or in a notebook that would belong to the family.

The following are seven questions which comprise the MAPS process:

1. WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF YOUR FAMILY AND CHILD?

   A short time is spent talking about the family. Such things as discussions about family members, family activities and some of their milestones could be recorded.

2. WHAT IS YOUR DREAM FOR YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR CHILD?

   An important question, as a goal of pre-assessment planning is to start to develop a vision for the family and child. It is important to look beyond the current reality and it will help families identify a direction. With this direction, families can better identify what they want to be planning and working towards for growth in their family unit, their child, and community.

3. WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST FEAR FOR YOUR FAMILY AND CHILD?

   This difficult but extremely important questions will present the situation that team members will work together to prevent from happening. It could provide insight for the family on issues they could address for further assistance and help.

4. WHO ARE WE AS A FAMILY?

Again, a short time is spent on describing the family. No words are right or wrong.

5. WHAT ARE YOUR FAMILY AND CHILD'S STRENGTHS, GIFTS, AND ABILITIES?

Building on the strengths and abilities is the focal point of family-centered birth to three services. A list could be made to describe the families strengths and unique gifts. A list is, also, made about the child's strengths and abilities. It is important to talk about what they can do, what they like to do, and what they do well.

6. WHAT ARE THE NEEDS FOR MY FAMILY AND CHILD?

This question provides the opportunity for the family to identify their needs from their unique perspective. A list is made, then prioritized. This is the beginning of the program design.

7. WHAT WOULD AN IDEAL DAY LOOK LIKE FOR MY FAMILY AND CHILD AND WHAT MUST BE DONE TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?

All planning that occurs should be done within the context of the family's day and home. The family service coordinator and family and possibly with other team members over time, could stratigize ways that the needs identified could be met with in context of a normal day. The final program should present an integrated, well balanced family routine and day.

The MAPS process can become a starting point, a road map, and vision for the planning of supportive and effective intervention services. The starting point is the pre-assessment planning meeting. At this meeting or meetings, the strategies for evaluation and assessment can begin with direction from the family. As time progresses, a service plan can be developed and the family and professionals can work together on realizing a vision.

Written by Lynne Schauls, Parent, Luck, WI

F:MAPS.H02

HELPING OTHERS KNOW YOUR CHILD

1. What is your child like most of the time (fussy, laid back, easy going, demanding, very active. sleepy, hungry)?
2. Is s/he pretty predictable or is s/he changeable?
3. What kinds of things are the most fun for you and your child to do together?
4. How does s/he let you know s/he likes something?
5. What are his/her special or favorite:
   - toys?
   - sounds?
   - colors?
   - smells?
   - positions?
   - people?
   - foods?
   - textures?
   - light/dark rooms?
6. How does s/he like to be held?
7. How does s/he respond to voices of mom, dad, brothers, sisters, strangers?
8. What activities does ___(sibling)___ like to play with_____?
9. How do you get your child to smile, laugh, look at you?
10. Can you show me some of the baby games you both enjoy (peek-a-boo, patty cake, in-out, catch me, I'm going to get you)?
11. What does s/he do to entertain him/herself when s/he plays alone?
12. How can you tell when s/he's happy? sad? mad?
13. How does s/he let you know what s/he means? Does s/he have different ways of getting your attention?
14. How does s/he act with people s/he doesn't know well, i.e., babysitter?
15. How does s/he act if you leave the room?
16. What is his/her daily schedule like?
17. Does s/he have set routines for eating and sleeping?
18. How do you put him/her to sleep? How does his/her schedule fit with the rest of the family?
19. Does s/he like to eat or is s/he a fussy eater? What does s/he like to eat? Not like to eat? How does s/he eat (take bottle, spoon feed, finger feed, use utensils)? Is s/he very neat, very messy, in between?
20. How does s/he like bath time?
21. What works to comfort and sooth him/her when upset?
22. Who else spends time playing with him/her besides you?
23. How does grandma and grandpa, aunts and uncles, interact with your child?
24. What does s/he do that makes you feel happy?
25. How does s/he let you know that s/he's had enough and wants to stop?
26. Does s/he ever do things that surprise you?
27. What times of day are best for your child? For you? For other children? For your spouse?
28. Is there anything that seems painful for your child?
29. What things about being a mother/father do you feel is hard? What are the rewarding times?

Project Lift, Portage, WI/8-88

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PLACEMENT---QUESTIONS PARENTS CAN ASK THEMSELVES

1. What placement do I prefer as a step toward the vision I have for my child's future?

2. What are all the possible places my child could receive services in the community? As placements are considered, what will be the reasons to eliminate some of them? What features of a setting will make it appropriate for my child? Am I satisfied all options for placement have been explored?

3. Who will decide on the placement for my child? If a placement has been proposed, what other settings were discussed? What type of brainstorming was done in selecting the proposed placement? Why were the other placements dismissed?

4. What does meaningful progress mean to me?

5. Make a list of the child's needs as parents assess them. Prioritize this list. How can each need be met in each possible placement?

6. Would it benefit my child to be at the top of the class, or does it matter to either my child or myself?

7. How much time will my child spend with children with disabilities? Why is this necessary? How will this time help my child to be more normal?

8. Does the proposed placement "fit" right? Does it feel good to me?

9. If a particular setting is not ideal, what needs to be done to make it work better for my child and family?

Compiled by Jo Gwost

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ACTIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING

Needs	Ways to Meet Needs	Program Resources to Meet Needs	Family Resources to Meet Needs	Alternative Sources of Support from Community
Child				
Family				
Program				

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